DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
COMMANDER
NAVAL METEOROLOGY AND OCEANOGRAPHY COMMAND
1020 BALCH BOULEVARD
STENNIS SPACE CENTER, MS 39529-5005

NAVMETOCCOMINST 1500.3F
N3
13 APR 1995

NAVMETOCCOM INSTRUCTION 1500.3F

From: Commander, Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command

Subj: PROCEDURES FOR QUALIFICATION AND CERTIFICATION OF NAVY AND MARINE CORPS AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS AS TOWER VISIBILITY OBSERVERS

Ref: (a) NATOPS Air Traffic Control Facilities Manual, NAVAIR 00-80T-114 of 01 Dec 1993 (NOTAL)
(b) Federal Meteorological Handbook No. 1 (FMH-1) of Aug 94
(c) Manual of Surface Observations, NAVAIR 50-1D-1, (FMH-1B) of 1 Dec 88
(d) NAVEDTRA 40180-A, Tower Visibility Observations
(e) NAVOCEANO Notice 1552 of 23 Aug 94

Encl: (1) Training Objectives for Tower Visibility Observers
(2) Sample Letter of Certification/Authorization
(3) Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command Certification

1. Purpose. To provide basic guidelines and standardize R) procedures for those Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command (NAVMETOCCOM) and Marine Corps Weather activities charged with the responsibilities to train, qualify and recommend certification of local air traffic controllers to observe, record and disseminate visibility information.

2. Cancellation. NAVOCEANCOMINST 1500.3E

3. Discussion. Reference (a) requires air traffic controllers to be qualified and certified as tower visibility observers in accordance with this instruction. To satisfy the requirements of reference (a), NAVMETOCCOM and Marine Corps weather activities supporting aviation operations are tasked to

provide required training and examination in accordance with this instruction and the observational procedures outlined in references (b) and (c).

4. Training. NAVMETOCCOM and Marine Corps weather activities will conduct local training programs enabling air traffic controllers to meet the objectives in enclosure (1). The practical training publication of reference (d), supplemented by locally prepared instructional material, provides an
A) effective basis for such a program. Training in decoding aviation and METAR weather observations and terminal forecasts is also encouraged for air traffic control personnel.

5. Qualification Testing. Following appropriate training, a standard Tower Visibility Observer Qualification Test, NAVEDTRA 40181-A or 40182-A, shall be administered and graded.
R) These tests are available from the Naval Oceanographic Office (Code N2513), Stennis Space Center, Mississippi. Activities using the tests on a recurring basis are authorized permanent custody of the qualification tests and Supervisor's Guide, NAVEDTRA 40183-A, ensuring that adequate security precautions are followed in their handling and storage.

6. Certification. After a demonstrated attainment of the objectives stated in enclosure (1) through performance and successful completion of the qualification test, the qualifying activity will prepare and forward a letter to the air traffic controller's Commanding Officer/Officer in Charge using the format of enclosure (2). This letter will reflect on the individual's satisfactory completion of tower visibility qualification requirements to effect the Commanding Officer's/Officer in Charge's certification. Additional recognition may include: issuance of enclosure (3) upon initial certification as Air Traffic Control Tower Visibility Observer, and comments in evaluations.

7. Requalification. All air traffic controllers required to take tower visibility observations must requalify upon arrival at a new duty station. Any further periodic requalification is at the discretion of local air traffic control facility officials.

8. Action.

a. Where air traffic controllers are charged with taking visibility observations, NAVMETOCCOM and Marine Corps weather activities shall maintain a training program in accordance with the guidelines of this instruction.

b. NAVOCEANO shall update, as required, the practical training publication and standard qualification tests to meet the objectives stated in enclosure (1). Proposed revisions/updates to this instruction should be forwarded by NAVOCEANO to COMNAVMETOCCOM for approval and distribution.

9. Requests for Materials. Submit requests for instructional texts and qualification tests using enclosure (3) of reference (e) to the Commanding Officer, Naval Oceanographic Office, Code N2513, 1002 Balch Blvd., Stennis Space Center, MS 39522-5001.

10. Concurrence. This instruction has the concurrence of the Chief of Naval Operations (N885F) and the Commandant of the Marine Corps. Marine Corps activities shall take such actions prescribed in this instruction which are not contradictory to specifically expressed policies of the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

D. A. MAUTNER
Acting

Distribution:
24A Air Force Commanders
26H Fleet Training Group and Detachment
27G Support Force Antarctica

46Q	Marine Wing Support Group (Attn: Weather Service Officer)
46R	Marine Wing Support Squadron (Attn: Weather Service Officer)
46U	Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron (Attn: Weather Service Officer)
A6	Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps (Attn: ASL-44)
C20C	Research Laboratory Detachments (Monterey only)
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FB48	Support Facility, PAC
FC5	Support Activity, EUR (Naples only)
FC7	Station, EUR
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FKR6C	Air Weapons Station
FR3	Air Station, RESFOR
FT1	Education and Training, Chief of
FT2	Air Training
FT5	Coordinator Mid South, CNET
FT6	Air Station CNET
FT13	Air Technical Training Center
V3	Marine Corps Air Base
V4	Marine Corps Air Facility (Attn: Weather Service Officer)
V5	Marine Corps Air Station (Attn: Weather Service Officer)
V12	Marine Corps Combat Development Command
V25	Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center (Attn: Weather Service Officer)

Headquarters, U.S. Air Force (Attn: XOW)
AWS (Attn: DOO)

Copy to:

A3	Chief of Naval Operations (N096, N885F only)
A5	Chief of Naval Personnel (404D only)
B2A	Special Agencies, Staffs, Boards, and Committees (DIA, NSA, CJCS (J33, J0D-J-36, JRC) only)
C3	Naval Personnel at DOD or Other Government Agencies (NAVDEPNOAA only)
C20C	Naval Research Laboratory Detachments (Stennis Space Center only)
FF42	Postgraduate School
FF44	War College
FKR6B	Air Warfare Center Weapons Division (Point Mugu only)
FT15	Technical Training Unit (Keesler AFB only)
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MARCORDET Keesler AFB
Office of the Federal Coordinator for Meteorological Services and Supporting Research

TRAINING OBJECTIVES FOR TOWER VISIBILITY OBSERVERS

Each individual recommended for certification shall be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the Manual of Surface Observations (NAVAIR 50-1D-1) which gives instructions for taking and recording tower visibility observations.

R) 2. Define prevailing, sector, variable and tower visibility.

R) 3. State the visibility criteria which require certified tower personnel to commence taking, recording and reporting observations of prevailing visibility.

R) 4. List the reportable visibility values less than four miles (Table 9-7 of reference (b) of Federal Meteorological Handbook No. 1 (FMH-1) of August 1994).

5. State the visibility criteria which require the tower observer to record and report the visibility condition to the weather office.

6. Identify each local visibility landmark (day and night landmarks) and state its recorded distance from the tower; the visibility marker chart or photograph may be used as an aid.

7. State the visibility that should be recorded when the prevailing visibility falls halfway between two reportable values.

8. Determine the reportable prevailing visibility for each of a series of diagrams depicting different sector visibilities surrounding the station.

9. Determine the reportable prevailing visibility and the required remarks for sector visibility for each of a series of diagrams depicting different sector visibilities surrounding the station.

10. State the criteria for using a "V" for variable with reportable visibility values.

11. Given a series of examples of variable visibility, determine the reportable prevailing visibility and the required remarks.

12. State the condition(s), other than those that are mandatory, when the tower observer should take and record visibility data, and report it to the weather office.

SAMPLE LETTER OF CERTIFICATION/AUTHORIZATION
(COMMAND LETTERHEAD)

1500
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From: (Issuing Activity)
To: (Certified Member's Rate/Name, USN/USNR (as applicable), SSN)
or
(Certified Member's Rank/Name, SSN/MOS, USMC)
Via: Commanding Officer

Subj: NOTIFICATION OF QUALIFICATION AND CERTIFICATION AS A NAVY (OR MARINE CORPS) AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER VISIBILITY OBSERVER

Ref: (a) NAVMETOCCOMINST 1500.3F

1. Having demonstrated a satisfactory level of proficiency, completed qualification training and demonstrated the prerequisite knowledge required by reference (a), you are recommended for certification as a Tower Visibility Observer at this activity.

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FIRST ENDORSEMENT

From: Commanding Officer
To: (Certified Member's Rate/Name, USN/USNR (as applicable), SSN)

or

(Certified Member's Rank/Name, SSN/MOS, USMC)

1. Forwarded with congratulations! You are hereby certified to observe, record and disseminate Tower Visibility Observations at _____ (e.g., NAS Alameda).

(Signature of Certifying Authority)

Copy to:
Activity files
Training record
Local service record

Enclosure (2)